

**“RECYCLE MORE, TRASH LESS”**  
**South End Recycling Pilot**  
**City of Boston Public Works and Transportation Department**

**Boston Single-Stream Recycling Pilot using wheeled-carts and  
clear plastic bags**

**Single-Stream Recycling Pilots**

The City of Boston is investigating ways to increase participation, tonnage, and cleanliness of its weekly curbside recycling collection program. Therefore, the Public Works and Transportation Department (PWTD) is conducting “Recycle More, Trash Less” pilots. The pilots test the feasibility of collecting residential recyclables mixed together in one enclosed recycling container. This collection method is known in the recycling industry as “single-stream” collection.

**Objectives:**

1. test if larger recycling receptacles and clear plastic bags increase recycling tonnage and participation
2. test single-stream recycling
3. test semi-automated and automated collection using of 95 and 64-gallon carts
4. evaluate what methods are expandable to other neighborhoods

The Jamaica Plain/Roslindale “Recycle More, Trash Less” pilot, which is testing large wheeled-carts for all recyclables, has been running for 4 months. The results so far are a 53 percent increase in recycling tonnage, a 16 percent decrease in trash tonnage, and cleaner streets. Public Works provided JP & Roslindale residents, with Thursday recycling collection, with large wheeled carts. PWTD distributed 2500 65- and 95-gallon carts, and instructed residents to put their paper, cardboard, bottles, cans and plastic containers mixed together in the carts.

**South End Recycling Pilots**

Littered streets and alleys have been an ongoing issue for South End residents. PWTD is proposing that single-stream recycling can be part of the solution. Public Works will conduct a

single-stream pilot in the South End testing two recycling containers; 1) a wheeled-cart and 2) a clear plastic bag. Public Works collects trash and recycling on Tuesdays in the South End. Residents in residential buildings with 6 or less units will be asked to participate in the pilot which begins in October 2007. Participating households will be informed of the pilots through direct mail, door-to-door flyering, two events, press releases, the City's web site, blog and listserv.

### **Wheeled-carts in Alleys**

Public Works will give residents with alley collection large wheeled-carts to use instead of their recycling bins. Residents will be allowed to put their paper, cardboard, bottles, cans and plastic containers mixed together into the carts. The wheeled-cart pilot test will occur in the section of the South End between Massachusetts Avenue and Yarmouth Street, and between Columbus Avenue the Orange Line subway tracks, and an alley that runs between West Newton Street and Rutland Square. This area represents about 500 households in residential buildings with fewer than 7 units. This area has alley trash and recycling collection. Each residential building will receive either a 95 or 64-gallon wheeled cart. The carts will be collected every Tuesday beginning in October 2, 2007.

### **Clear Plastic Bags on the Curb**

Residents who put their recycling on the curb in front of their houses will be allowed to use clear plastic bags instead of recycling bins. The clear plastic bag collection option is being offered to these residents because many have been unable to recycle due to their inability to store recycling bins. Residents can mix their paper (including empty pizza boxes) bottles, cans and plastic containers together in the plastic bags. Flatten cardboard, which measures less than 3'x 3', will be placed under the plastic bags. Residents will purchase the clear plastic bags at neighborhood stores where trash bags are sold. Storing trash in proper trash receptacles will also be encouraged in this pilot. Residents can use 32-gallon trash cans or strong (2-ply) 32-gallon black or green plastic trash bags.

### **Pilot Evaluation**

The pilots will gage the impact the carts and the plastic bags have on tonnage collected, participation, and cleanliness. Proper preparation of recycling and trash will be inspected on a weekly

basis. Recycling and trash tonnage will be evaluated on a monthly basis. Residents will be able to ask questions or make suggestions on a regular basis through the RecycleMore listserv and blog. After six months, Public Works will survey residents' opinions.